

CHAPTER 17
LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDER EDUCATION
PROGRAM

Section 98000 Chapter Definitions

The following definitions shall apply to the regulations in this Chapter:

- (a) “Contract” means a written agreement between the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (hereinafter “Office”) and a recipient of a loan repayment that obligates the recipient, in exchange for financial assistance, to practice their profession for a specified period of time.
- (b) “Cultural and linguistic competence” means the ability to understand and respond effectively to the cultural and linguistic needs brought by patients to mental health care encounters.
- (c) “Direct patient care” means the provision of health care services directly to individuals being treated for, or suspected of having, physical or mental illness. Direct patient care includes preventative care. The first line supervision of direct patient care shall be considered “direct patient care.”
- (d) “Director” means the Director of the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development.
- (e) “Educational loan” means a loan of money by a commercial lender or government entity that requires payment, and was obtained by an individual for the purpose of defraying costs associated with their mental health service provider education.
- (f) “Foundation” means the Health Professions Education Foundation.
- (g) “Licensed mental health service provider” means a psychologist licensed by the Board of Psychology, registered psychologist, postdoctoral psychological assistant, postdoctoral psychology trainee employed in an exempt setting pursuant to Section 2910 of the Business and Professions Code, or employed pursuant to a Department of Mental Health waiver pursuant to Section 5751.2 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, marriage and family therapist, marriage and family therapist intern, licensed clinical social worker, and associate clinical social worker.
- (h) “Mental Health Practitioner Education Fund” means the fund established pursuant to section 128458 of the Health and Safety Code.
- (i) “Mental Health Professional Shortage Area” means an area designated as such by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Service Administration, Bureau of Health Professions’ Shortage Designation Branch.
- (j) “Qualified facility” means one of the following:
 - (1) “A publicly funded facility,” which means a health facility, as defined by Health and Safety Code Sections 1200, 1200.1, and 1250, conducted, maintained, or operated by this state or by any of its political subdivisions or districts, or by any city.
 - (2) “A publicly funded or public mental health facility,” which means a hospital, clinic, or long-term care facility licensed and/or certified by the California Department of Mental Health and/or the California Department of Health Services that is conducted, maintained, or operated by this state or by any of its political subdivisions or districts, or by any city, and that provides mental health services.

(3) “A non-profit private mental health facility,” which means a hospital, clinic, or long-term care facility licensed and/or certified by the California Department of Mental Health and/or the California Department of Health Services that is operated by a non-profit entity that contracts with a county mental health entity or facility to provide mental health services.

(k) “Service obligation” means the contractual obligation agreed to by the recipient of a loan repayment where the recipient agrees to practice their profession for a specified period of time in a qualified facility or a mental health professional shortage area.

Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code.

Reference: Section 128454, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98010 Available Funding

(a) The Office shall award loan repayment to eligible applicants, subject to the availability of funds in the Mental Health Practitioner Education Fund.

(b) Fees collected from the different licensed providers shall be kept separate and shall fund loan repayment awards for recipients from the corresponding licensed provider group.

Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code.

Reference: Sections 128454 and 128458, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98011 Loan Repayment Eligibility

(a) To be eligible for loan repayment, an applicant must:

(1) Be a licensed mental health service provider.

(2) Practice as a licensed mental health service provider who provides direct patient care in or through a qualified facility or in a mental health professional shortage area.

(b) An applicant who has signed a contract or written agreement with another entity to practice their mental health profession in exchange for financial assistance, including tuition reimbursement, scholarship, loans, or loan repayment, shall be ineligible to receive a loan repayment under this Chapter until the obligation to this other entity has been fulfilled.

Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code; section 11152, Government Code.

Reference: Section 128454, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98012 Loan Repayment Awards

(a) The Office will contract to repay a specified amount, on behalf of the program recipient, towards the principal, interest, and related expenses on outstanding governmental and commercial educational loans, not in default, related to the recipient’s education required to become a licensed mental health service provider.

(b) The loan repayment award amount for each provider group shall not exceed the estimated annual average cost to attend the respective mental health education program throughout California, as provided by the California Student Aid Commission, for the academic year in which the repayment application has been submitted.

(c) The loan repayment amount awarded shall not exceed the total amount of debt owed on outstanding governmental and commercial education loans for mental health profession education related to pursuing a career as a licensed mental health service provider.

Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code.

Reference: Sections 128454 and 128458, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98013 Loan Repayment Contracts

(a) The Office will enter into one (1) loan repayment contract per recipient at a time.

(b) The Office may enter into an additional loan repayment contract if:

(1) The recipient applies for an additional loan repayment;

(2) The recipient has fulfilled the terms and conditions of the previously-awarded loan repayment contract; and

(3) The recipient otherwise continues to be eligible for participation in the program.

(c) The Office shall not award more than two (2) contracts to any recipient.

Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code.

Reference: Section 128454, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98014 Terms of Loan Repayment

(a) Loan repayments shall be made on a quarterly basis.

(b) Loan repayments shall be conditioned upon the recipient providing:

(1) Quarterly reports substantiating service in or through a qualified facility or in a mental health professional shortage area in California, and

(2) Updated lender statements.

(c) The recipient shall continue to make any required periodic payments concurrently with payments made by the Office to avoid defaulting on outstanding loans.

(d) Nothing in this section shall prohibit the Office from paying a recipient directly, instead of a lender or note holder.

Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code.

Reference: Section 128454, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98015 Loan Application Process

(a) Each person desiring a loan repayment shall submit a completed application.

(b) The completed loan repayment application shall include information and documentation to establish the following:

(1) Proof of licensure, including license number issued by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences or the California Board of Psychology, or proof of registration, including registration number issued by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences, or a unique identification number issued by the California Board of Psychology.

(2) Current employment as a licensed mental health service provider providing direct patient care in or through a qualified facility or in a mental health professional shortage area.

- (3) The loan repayment amount requested with documentation on outstanding educational loans related to education required to become a licensed mental health service provider, including the current outstanding loan balance(s);
 - (4) Community background and involvement;
 - (5) Career goals;
 - (6) Cultural and linguistic competence;
 - (7) Two (2) letters of recommendation, dated within six (6) months of the application deadline, including author's name, mailing address, phone number, and relationship to applicant. Letters may comment on applicant's work experience, community service, volunteer activities, memberships in clubs, and/or attributes that indicate the applicant's likelihood to continue to practice in or through a qualified facility or in a mental health professional shortage area after service obligation has ended;
 - (8) A personal statement indicating qualifications, attributes, or characteristics that would increase the likelihood the applicant would continue to provide direct patient care in or through a qualified facility or in a mental health professional shortage area in California after service obligation has ended; and
 - (9) Any other information the applicant believes is relevant.
- (c) For the first calendar year of implementation, applications shall be due the fourth Friday in September. From the second year on, deadlines for the two (2) annual loan application cycles, shall be March 24 and September 11.
- Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code.
- Reference: Section 128454, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98016 Selection Process

In recommending loan repayment recipients to the Office, the Foundation shall take into consideration the mental health workforce needs, including cultural and linguistic, of the state in general and the needs of qualified facilities and mental health professional shortage areas.

Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code.

Reference: Section 128454, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98017 Service Obligation Provisions for Loan Repayment Recipient

- (a) For each loan repayment contract, the recipient shall agree to a service obligation to practice their mental health profession in direct patient care for twenty-four (24) months in or through a qualified facility or in a mental health professional shortage area in California. The service obligation must be fulfilled on a full-time basis. "Full time basis" means a regular work week of not less than thirty-two (32) hours.
- (b) The service obligation for each loan repayment contract shall become effective and shall commence upon the signing of the contract between the Office and the recipient.

Authority cited: Sections 127010, Health and Safety Code.

Reference: Section 128454, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98018 Penalties for Failure to Comply with Requirements of Program

Penalties for failure to comply with the requirements of this loan repayment program shall be as specified in Section 97747 of Chapter 14 of this Division, except that total repayment shall be required in monthly installments within seven (7) years.

Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code.

Reference: Section 128454, Health and Safety Code.

Section 98019 Exceptions to Service or Payment Obligations

Service or payment obligation may be cancelled, waived, suspended, reduced, or delayed as specified in Section 97726 of Chapter 14 of this Division.

Authority cited: Sections 127010 and 127015, Health and Safety Code.

Reference: Section 128454, Health and Safety Code.